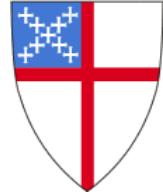


The Lessons Appointed for Use on
the Feast of
Independence Day

July 4



Deuteronomy 10:17-21
Hebrews 11:8-16
Matthew 5:43-48
Psalm 145 or 145:1-9

The Collect

Lord God Almighty, in whose Name the founders of this country won liberty for themselves and for us, and lit the torch of freedom for nations then unborn: Grant that we and all the people of this land may have grace to maintain our liberties in righteousness and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Old Testament

Deuteronomy 10:17-21

The LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall fear the LORD your God; him alone you shall worship; to him you shall hold fast, and by his name you shall swear. He is your praise; he is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things that your own eyes have seen.

The Response

Psalm 145 or 145:1-9

Exaltabo te, Deus

- 1 I will exalt you, O God my King, *
and bless your Name for ever and ever.
- 2 Every day will I bless you *
and praise your Name for ever and ever.
- 3 Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; *
there is no end to his greatness.
- 4 One generation shall praise your works to another *
and shall declare your power.

5 I will ponder the glorious splendor of your majesty *
and all your marvelous works.

6 They shall speak of the might of your wondrous acts, *
and I will tell of your greatness.

7 They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness; *
they shall sing of your righteous deeds.

8 The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, *
slow to anger and of great kindness.

9 The LORD is loving to everyone *
and his compassion is over all his works.

The Epistle

Hebrews 11:8-16

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old-- and Sarah herself was barren-- because he considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, "as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore."

All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

The Gospel

Matthew 5:43-48

Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Optional parts of the readings are set off in square brackets.

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